



ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL

HERALD



245 VALENCIA STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94103 • 415 864-8000 • FAX 415 431-5860 • E-MAIL office@annunciation.org

FEBRUARY 2000

ARCHBISHOP DEMETRIOS TO VISIT BAY AREA; BANQUET TO BE HELD

Archbishop Demetrios of America will make his first visit to the West Coast during the February 17-20 Folk Dance Festival. On Friday, February 18, the Diocese of San Francisco, headed by **His Eminence Metropolitan Anthony**, will host a Grand Banquet in his honor. The event will take place at the Doubletree Hotel, located at 2050 Gateway Place in San Jose. A no host social hour will begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:30 p.m. The donation is \$100 per person. Reservations, however, are a must. Reservations must be made prior to February 15. You may call the Cathedral office (so that all Annunciation Cathedral

parishioners are seated at adjoining tables) or you may write to **Christina Kontgas**, 370 Avenida Manzanos, San Jose, CA 95123. Checks should be made payable to: Diocese Philoptochos, Archbishop's visit.

Annunciation has always been well represented at these events; this banquet is no exception. This will be a unique opportunity to welcome our new Archbishop, a well-known theologian and spiritual mentor to many of our priests, since his teaching days at Holy Cross School of Theology beginning in the mid-1960s.

It's close by - let's do it!

YOUR 1999 DONATION STATEMENT EXPLAINED

By now, you have all received your 1999 Donation Statement. You will notice that there are posted amounts with an explanation for those amounts, for example, stewardship or millenium calendar, etc. Then there are amounts with a minus sign before them. These amounts (with the minus sign) show what you have actually given. The amounts with no minus signs are the amounts for the various charges, or the posted amounts. All you need to do to come up with how much you gave during 1999 is simply add up the amounts with the minus signs in front of them.

Now, why can't the Cathedral add them up for you? Simply, because not all amounts given are donations and, therefore, fully deductible. Some items, like stewardship pledge donations, are fully tax deductible. Others, like purchasing books and the like, are not. Still others may be both. For example, let's say you gave \$100 to come to an event, like a dinner. A portion of the amount you gave is deductible, that is, whatever is above and beyond the cost of the dinner you received. But, let's say, at the last minute, you were unable to attend, and you decided you did not want a refund. Then, the full amount you gave is tax deductible. The best thing to do when preparing your income tax is to consult with your accountant or the person who prepares your taxes.

Meanwhile, we are considering forms for the year 2000 which will make it easier for you to determine what is deductible, and what is not. These forms will list your donations in categories, making it easier for you to understand what you gave and easier, of course, when the time comes to prepare your year 2000 taxes.

MILLENNIUM SWEEPSTAKES WINNERS!

Each Sunday during the coffee hour, the winning tickets for our millennium sweepstakes are drawn, for an entire week. The winners are posted weekly to our Web Site, annunciation.org.

Here are the winners to date: \$2000, 1/1: Dean Poulakidas, \$100 each, 1/2: unsold ticket; 1/3: unsold ticket; 1/4: Melanie Mountanos; 1/5: Tula Dukas; 1/6: John Eliopoulos; 1/7: Mike Vriheas; 1/8: unsold ticket; 1/9: Steve & Tony Bach; 1/10: Bob & Gale Gravley; 1/11: Mike Vriheas; 1/12: unsold ticket; 1/13: Betty Cherin; 1/14: George Koutsogorgas; 1/15: Corrine

Mavridis; 1/16: unsold ticket; 1/17: Athan Dalianes; 1/18: Kathy Kennedy; 1/19: Mata Salia Berme; 1/20: Harry Mitsanas; 1/21: Sophie Suvidis; 1/22: Pete Bozionelos; 1/23: Jim & Luba Cocolos; 1/24: unsold ticket; 1/25: Faye Andros; 1/26: Alethia Bapis; 1/27: Lillian Hamberis; 1/28: unsold ticket; 1/29: Matthew Boosalis. Each and every day during 2000 (366 days) the odds of winning are 1/1000. **Congratulations!**

It is still not too late to purchase your millennium sweepstakes ticket. Call the Cathedral office at 415 864-8000.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Creating our Future

Well we made it into the 21st Century and it has the promise and potential to be the greatest of the millenia and we are here to witness its beginning! We are indeed in the future. Peter Drucker had this to say, "It's really impossible to predict the future. You should spend time creating it." What good advice since the future comes in the natural progression of time and we should not be afraid but rather be about the business of creating that future we would like to have.

This sage advice can be taken to heart in our very own Annunciation community. The Parish Council began its first meeting of 2000 looking towards our community's future with optimism and excitement. Committees were appointed and fund raising/social events were discussed and calendared. They include, just to name a few, Godparent's Day (March 12), an exciting resurrection of the Pentahiliarikon (November 18), the Western Barbecue (May), our Taste of Greece Festival (September 24), Palm Sunday, Easter Mageritsa, a possible Art Exhibition and a new and exciting New Year's Eve celebration. We are still in the planning stage and other events can be considered. So put these dates on your calendar and look for reminders in the coming editions of the Herald.

Yet more importantly, discussion was held on looking to the future growth of our Religious Community. Our Stewardship growth and commitment shows that there is much potential in our future. The Council is concerned and looking towards meeting the needs of all groups within our Church. There is need for our entire community to be involved in the Vision of where we want our Church to be in the future.

Everyone on this Council is dedicated to working towards finishing our complex however long it may take, to finding ways of servicing our debt and to keeping the faith alive for all who enter our doors. Topics such as finishing the first phase of the Cathedral, obtaining our final permit for occupancy, hiring a second priest, developing better facilitation of existing and

new programs for the needs of all our members, revitalizing our endowment, purchasing additional space for parking, looking at a timeline for building of the Cathedral were placed on the table for future discussion.

With this in mind we need your time and talent to help us on the road to a new Vision. There are many committees and programs in the Church one can join to to address the above topics. Just let us know how you would like to serve by filling out the questionnaire developed by the Stewardship committee or speaking to Father Stephen or anyone on the Parish Council. Let me challenge each and every one to rededicate yourself to building a Church for our future. Let us be true and faithful to one another, keeping the sacred lamp of our faith burning brightly. This truly can be the greatest of adventures!

Patricia Aleck
Parish Council President

GODPARENTS SUNDAY SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 12

Called "Godparents' Sunday," this is a unique opportunity for Godparents to call their Godchildren and for Godchildren to call their Godparents and invite them to worship at the Divine Liturgy together, and to renew their sacred bond bestowed at Baptism by renewing their baptismal vows and by receiving Holy Communion together.

This event is being planned by the Stewardship Committee, which will also host a brunch following the Divine Liturgy. The Divine Liturgy begins at 10:30 a.m., following the service of Orthros, which begins at 9 a.m.

TUESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY AT THE CATHEDRAL

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'" (Isaiah 6.8). Seven centuries before the birth of Christ, in the midst of the crumbling kingdom surrounded by powerful foes, a single voice emerged, summoning the Jewish people to repentance and renewal. His name was

Isaiah, his powerful message was to have a lasting impact upon both Judaism and Christianity. The book of Isaiah is frequently studied because of its many amazingly detailed prophecies of the coming of Christ. Yet the book is notable not only for this, but also for the tremendous contemporaneity of its message. Isaiah spoke to a nation in crisis, to a people struggling to find God in the midst of profound uncertainty, and his message continues to have great relevance even in the twenty-first century. Please join us as we discover the treasures of this important book!

Each Tuesday evening at the Cathedral, beginning February 1st, 7-9 p.m., Deacon Paul will take us on a journey through the Book of Isaiah. We will benefit from his insights as we explore the great prophet who, more than any other, influenced both Jesus and the understanding and acceptance of Jesus as Messiah. The course is open to all who wish to learn more about biblical prophecy, the role of prophecy in Israel and in the New Israel, the Church, and Isaiah in particular. There is no charge for this study and all are welcome. For further information call Deacon Paul at 415 753-3075.

DIOCESE CLERGY LAITY TO CONVENE AT ST NICHOLAS RANCH FEBRUARY 2-4 (PARISH ASSEMBLY APRIL 16)

The annual Diocese Clergy Laity Conference will take place at the St. Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center February 2-4. The Diocese Clergy Laity Conference is the forum for the discussion of issues which affect our Diocese and the resolution of those issues both at the local Conference and at the Archdiocesan Biennial Clergy Laity.

The Annunciation Cathedral will be represented at the Diocese Clergy Laity Conference by the Dean, Father Stephen and the Parish Council President, Pat Aleck. They will report to the Parish Assembly, which will be convened April 16, 2000. The April 16 Parish Assembly will also elect two additional representatives to the Archdiocesan Biennial Clergy Laity Congress, which will be held in Philadelphia, the first week in July, 2000.

SACRAMENTS AND SERVICES

BAPTIZED ON:

January 16, 2000 Antonios Dimitrios, son of Jim and Erika Panagiotopoulos. Vasiliki Betty Cherin was the sponsor.

January 23, 2000 Anthony James, son of Christine Ann Chiappari. Annette Chiappari was the sponsor.
Na mas zisoun.

MARRIED ON:

January 15, 2000 Steven George Kolokithas and Marguerite Nicole Pence. Dimitrios Xenakis was the sponsor.

January 23, 2000 George A. Panagiotopoulos and Dimetra Armenakis. Panos Panagos was the sponsor.
Na mas zisoun.

SPIRITUAL ODYSSEY

AT HOLY CROSS CHURCH IN BELMONT

The Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross of Belmont will present "Spiritual Odyssey: An Orthodox Pilgrimage," a four-day symposium on the 2,000-year-old Orthodox Christian Church, February 24-27, in the Holy Cross Community Center, 900 Alameda (corner of Ralston Ave.). Spiritual Odyssey will feature inspiring and informative presentations by clergy and lay experts including Rev. Frank Marangos, Rev. Dr. John Chryssavgis, Rev. Spencer Kezios and Steve Cardiasmenos. Admission is free, and all are welcome. For more information, call (650) 591-4447, or visit the Spiritual Odyssey website: http://www.goholycross.org/home/spiritual_odyssey.html.

THREE MUSES RETURN, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2000

Back by popular demand, the Modern Greek Studies Foundation invites all to its program on Sunday, February 27, 2000 at 4 p.m. at the McKenna Theater as a benefit to the Center for Modern Greek Studies at San Francisco State University. Tickets are available at \$25 for adults and \$10 for students. They may be ordered by sending a check made out to Modern Greek Studies Foundation with a self-addressed stamped return envelope to: Titika Koplos, 6259 Merced Avenue, Oakland, CA 94611.

NAVARINO MESSINIAN SOCIETY TO HOLD MAKARONADA FEBRUARY 5

You are invited to attend the 54th annual Apokreatiki Makaronada Dinner Dance hosted by the Navarino Messinian Society of the San Francisco Bay Area to be held at the Annunciation Cathedral on Saturday, February 5, 2000. No host cocktails begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:30 p.m. The donation is \$35 for adults, \$15 for children under 12. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the earthquake victims of Greece. For information and reservations, please call **George Konstantopoulos** at 510 428-0204, **Tom Kastoras** at 415 337-7819, **Vasilios Harbas** at 510 261-7969, **Ilias Frangos** at 650 692-0686, or **Spiridoula Stavropoulos** at 650 375-0730.

TASTE OF THE TOWN

On Sunday, March 5, 2000, the Annunciation Cathedral will be the setting for the second annual Taste of the Town, a culinary extravaganza honoring the 65th birthday of **His Eminence, Metropolitan Anthony**. The gala celebration is sponsored by the Diocese of San Francisco Philoptochos Board and its Chapters. More than 36 top restaurants, great wineries and specialty beverage houses, will be featured, as well as an exciting variety of live entertainment, a silent auction and a balloon raffle, throughout the evening. Mark your calendars.

The hours are 5pm to 9pm and the price is \$65 per person. Black tie optional. For reservations or additional information, contact Mrs. John Cladis at 650/854-0499.

Ο ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΣ ΕΠΙΣΚΕΠΤΕΤΑΙ ΤΗΝ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΜΑΣ

Ο Σεβασμιώτατος Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής κ. Δημήτριος θα επισκεφθεί την Επισκοπή μας κατά τη διάρκεια του χορευτικού φεστιβάλ που θα λάβει χώρα στο Σαν Χοζέ, 17-20 Φεβρουαρίου, και θα παρακαθίσει σε τιμητικό δείπνο που θα δοθεί από τον Σεβασμιώτατο Μητροπολίτη μας κ. Αντώνιο και την οργανωτική επιτροπή στο ξενοδοχείο Doubletree, 2050 Gateway Place, San Jose, τη Παρασκευή 18 Φεβρουαρίου από τις 6:30 το απόγευμα. Καλείσθε όλοι όπως παρευρεθήτε στο δείπνο, αφού πρώτα κλείσετε θέσεις, αποστέλλοντας την επιταγή σας (η προσφορά είναι \$100 το άτομο) στη Χριστίνα Κόντζια, 370 Avenida Manzanos, San Jose, CA 95123. Γράψετε τις επιταγές ως εξής: Diocese Philoptochos, Archbishop's Visit. Θα είναι μία μοναδική ευκαιρία να γνωρίσουμε από κοντά τον νέο μας Αρχιεπίσκοπο, και να πάρουμε τις ευχές και τις ευλογίες του. Ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Δημήτριος είναι από τους πιο διάσημους θεολόγους της Εκκλησίας μας. Αποφοίτησε από το Πανεπιστήμιο HARVARD και έδιδε, μεταξύ άλλων, στη Θεολογική Σχολή του Τιμίου Σταυρού.

ΤΑ ΠΑΙΔΙΑ ΜΑΣ ΕΤΟΙΜΑΖΟΝΤΑΙ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΦΔΦ

Τα παιδιά των τριών χορευτικών συγκροτημάτων του Καθεδρικού μας Ναού εξασκούνται ώστε να συναγωνιστούν στο χορευτικό φεστιβάλ της Επισκοπής μας που θα λάβει χώρα στο Σαν Χοζέ 17-20 Φεβρουαρίου. Για πρώτη φορά, ο Καθεδρικός Ναός στέλλει στο φεστιβάλ αυτό όλα του τα γρουπ, περίπου 100 παιδιά! Τα ευχόμεθα το καλύτερο!

ΗΜΕΡΑ ΑΝΑΔΟΧΩΝ-ΑΝΑΔΕΚΤΩΝ

Η Κυριακή 12 Μαρτίου έχει καθορισθεί ως "Ημέρα Αναδόχων-Αναδεκτών." Είναι μία μοναδική ευκαιρία για όλους τους νονούς και τις νονές να συμπροσευχηθούν με τους βαπτισμιούς και τις βαπτισιμίες τους, να ανανεώσουν τους δεσμούς τους, να κοινωνήσουν τα Άχραντα Μυστήρια, και να παρακαθίσουν στο γεύμα που θα επακολουθήσει μετά τη Θεία Λειτουργία, που δίδεται προς τιμή τους. Η Θεία Λειτουργία θα αρχίσει ως συνήθως στις 10:30 το πρωί, αφού πρώτα τελεσθεί ο Όρθρος, που θα αρχίσει στις 9:00 π.μ. Σημειώστε την ημέρα και ελάτε μαζί να κηρύξουμε το: αποτάσσεσθε τῷ Σατανᾷ; ἀποτασσόμεθα! συντάσσεσθε τῷ Χριστῷ; συντασσόμεθα!

FOCUS ON YOUTH

GEARING UP FOR PARISH ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVAL APRIL 9

In 1999, Annunciation Cathedral had the most participants in the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival in recent memory. In 2000, we hope to top that participation. Open to students in the Cathedral's Sunday School program, participants compete in two divisions, the Junior Division and the Senior Division. Students select from among six topics--ranging from Scripture readings to quotes from the Church Fathers to aspects of the Church's sacraments, dogmatic and architectural heritage-- in each division and prepare a talk for delivery. This delivery will take place on Sunday, April 9. The winners from each division then go on to participate on the regional and then the Diocesan levels. Should one be selected from those festivals, that one will go on to compete in the national competition, which will take place in Philadelphia in July.

In other Sunday School news, our Sunday School staff, at its January, 2000 meeting, voted to award incentives, ranging from campships, books or videos and, of course, certificates to those students achiev-

ing Perfect Attendance (no absences), Excellent Attendance (one to three excused absences), Regular Attendance (attendance thirty or more Sundays, without qualifying for the above awards), and the Award of Merit. Regular attendance and participation in Sunday School is urged.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SONS OF PERICLES, CHAMPSIONS AGAIN!

The San Francisco Sons of Pericles went to Portland, Oregon to compete in the 2000 Sons of Pericles Western Regional Basketball Tournament, which took place January 14-17, 2000. The boys went to Portland looking for their 3rd consecutive Western Regional championship and did just that. They dominated the 11-team double elimination tournament going undefeated. They routed Seattle in the semifinals, 58-38, and then ran away from Tuscon, Arizona in the championship game, 62-45.

By winning their 3rd consecutive championship, the organization has now appeared in the final game 7 times in the last 9 years and won their 5th championship during that span. The team received fine performances from Dino Kratsas and

Denis Vorrises, as well as John Kratsas, who made the all-tournament team, and Dino Vasilogiorgis, who was voted the tournament's Most Valuable Player.

The team consisted of **John Kratsas, Dino Kratsas, Denis G. Vorrises, Dino Vasilogiorgis, Denis J. Vorrises, Kosta Vorrises, Nick Fanourgiakis, Anglo Vorrises,** and **Chris Kallas**, Coach. The San Francisco Sons, which primarily consists of members from the Annunciation Cathedral, are planning to compete in the National Tournament, to be held in New Orleans in July.

DANCERS BUSY GETTING READY FOR FDF

All three of Annunciation's Dance Groups are busy getting ready for this year's Folk Dance Festival, which will take place in San Jose, February 17-20. This is a busy time, to be sure. In addition to their regular school work, the children are putting in extra time getting ready for their preliminary and final rounds. This means extra practices, extra pressure. But, then, anything worthwhile doing is worth doing well. And, so, we encourage our groups, and look forward to their participation at FDF.

JUNIOR VARSITY BASKETBALL GAMES BEGIN

Following are games in which Annunciation Cathedral Junior Varsity teams are scheduled to play:

Sunday, February 6

- 2 p.m. Girls C Annunciation & Ascension, at Annunciation
- 3 p.m. Boys C Annunciation & Ascension, at Annunciation
- 4 p.m. Girls A Annunciation & Holy Cross, at Annunciation
- 3:30pm Boys A Annunciation & St. John, at Salinas

Sunday, February 13

- 2 p.m. Girls C Annunciation & Holy Cross 2, at Holy Cross
- 2 p.m. Boys C Annunciation & Holy Trinity, at Holy Trinity
- 3 p.m. Girls A Annunciation & St. Nicholas, at Annunciation
- 5 p.m. Boys A Annunciation & Holy Trinity, at Annunciation

Sunday, February 27

- 3 p.m. Girls A Annunciation & Holy Trinity, at Holy Trinity
- 3 p.m. Girls C Annunciation & St. Nicholas, at Monta Vista
- 4 p.m. Boys C Annunciation & St. Nicholas 1, at Monta Vista
- 5 p.m. Boys A Annunciation & St. Nicholas, at Monta Vista

Please attend our children's games and support our teams. As you can see, most of the Annunciation Junior Varsity games this season will be played at the Annunciation, on Sundays, following the Divine Liturgy.

February 2000

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS		Greek Dance Practice Bible Study 1	PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD 10 - Liturgy Diocese Clergy-Laity Today thru Friday Basketball Practice 2	High School Girls Basketball Practice 3		5
10:30-Divine Liturgy GOYA & JOY Sunday Greek Dance Practice 2-7pm - Basketball Games 6	7	Philoptochos Board Meeting Greek Dance Practice 6:30-Stewardship Comm Bible Study 8	Basketball Practice 9	High School Girls Basketball Practice Sunday School Staff Meeting 10	Book Committee Meeting 11	12
10:30-Divine Liturgy Greek Dance Practice 2-6pm - Basketball Games 13	14	Greek Dance Practice Bible Study 15	Basketball Practice Parish Council Mtg 16	High School Girls Basketball Practice FDF Begins 17	FDF Continues 18	FDF Continues Grand Banquet Archbishop Demetrios 19
10:30-Divine Liturgy FDF Continues 20	FDF Concludes 21	Philoptochos General Assembly Greek Dance Practice Bible Study 22	Basketball Practice 23	High School Girls Basketball Practice 24	25	26
10:30-Divine Liturgy 27	28	Greek Dance Practice Bible Study 29		SUNDAY SCHOOL begins at 10:30 am. Students go directly to classrooms		

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STEWARDSHIP 2000 UPDATE

By now, you have all received your special Stewardship Herald. We hope you have found it to be useful and informative.

The Stewardship Committee wishes to call to your attention three items: 1) if you wish to take care of your year 2000 stewardship by using a Visa or Mastercard, please submit your current credit card information along with your year 2000 stewardship pledge card. (We simply cannot take your credit card information off your 1999 stewardship pledge card.) 2) if you are interested in making your year 2000 stewardship pledge using stocks or other securities, as a result of your reading of the special Stewardship Herald, please call the Cathedral office at 415 864-8000 for further details. This may be an attractive option, resulting in a great tax savings, because, while you may have purchased your stock for a lot less money, say, during 1999 or earlier, you may deduct the full market value of the stock at the time you make your gift. In this way, you will avoid having to pay capital gains on the appreciated value of the stock. This is a win-win for everyone, for you, and for the Cathedral.

Finally, 3) please do not put off sending in your year 2000 stewardship pledge card. As announced earlier, we will be producing a year 2000 Stewardship Directory. Stewards who have made their year 2000 stewardship pledge by March 31, 2000 will be included in the directory, a most valuable resource. This, of course, does not mean you need to send your donation for the year 2000 by March 31st, just your pledge card. You may pay your pledge as you indicate on the card, monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually.

CORRECTION

In the special stewardship edition of the Herald, mailed to you recently, a sentence was left out of the

article entitled "Father Stephen's Thoughts." Replace the sentence which now reads "The Archdiocese is asking the Parishes to consider tithing - that is, parishioners giving 10% of their income as this year 2000 Stewardship Pledge for the support of national ministries" with "The Archdiocese is asking the Parishes to consider tithing for the support of national ministries. The parishes also encourage tithing at the local level - that is, parishioners giving 10% of their income for the support of the local parish."

STEWARDSHIP AT THE CATHEDRAL HAS GROWN

Compare the following statistics. You can easily see how we've grown over the last three years.

	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>
<u>1999</u>		
No. of pledges: 560	496	522
Dollars pledged \$258,774	\$196,088	\$243,645
Dollars collected: \$244,420	\$192,312	\$232,139
Average pledge: \$436.46	\$395.33	\$444.71

More importantly, we are also growing in terms of the numbers of participants at the Sunday Divine Liturgy and in our various youth and other programs. On most Sundays, for example, the chapel is full to overflowing. God is truly blessing us through the Annunciation Cathedral. Our vision of expanding our facilities, by building the Cathedral church, is, by the looks of things, going to become a reality very soon. Keep up the Faith and your good works!

STEWARDSHIP 2000

Remembering our Past...Embracing Our Future: Our Push Toward 100%

Thank you to the following parishioners, whose pledges were received from January 11 - January 25, 2000. We appreciate your commitment to God's work through our Church.

Lambrini Arestis
Chrisula T. Asimos
J. Steven & Antonia Bach
Frank & Hariklia Boone
Matthew Boosalis
Betty Cherin
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Delis
Giovanna-Maria De-Simone
Irene Despotakis
John & Annette Eliopoulos, Sr.
John Eliopoulos, Jr.
Peter J. Eliopoulos
Dimitri & Mary Fanourgiakis

Marguerite Farres
Athanasia & Steve Flynn
Mr. & Mrs. David Garibalidi
Arthur & Eugenia Gekas
Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Gundunas
Vicky Kallas
Alex Kamages
Michael & Stella Kasolas
James & Joanne Kavalaris
John & Angela Kazavis
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Kleinekorte
Despina Kokalis
Mary Kontis
Angelo & Victoria Koutoulas
Chrisoula Kotoulas
Rev. & Mrs. Stephen H. Kyriacou
S. Christopher Kyriacou
Frances Lampre
Rita Larson
Patricia Lazarakis
George & Chrisula Markoulakis
Beverly A. Meyer
Mary Mires

Michael & Christina Mithos
Angelo & Anne Mountanos
Thomas & Liberty Nuris
Tessie Obester
George Panagiotides
Gregory & Mary Pantages
Angelo & Mary Pappas
Nina Pappas
Nick & Shannon Paras
Peter & Alice Piscopos
Demetri Polites, M.D.
James & Despina Poulos
Fofa Preovolos
Florence Prescott
Emily Zoe Sarantakis
Georgia Spanos
Marios Stathopoulos
Ann Thanos
Basil & Mary Tonas
Mary Tsougarakis
August & Anthy Vastardis
Irene Vilcheck
Mr. & Mrs. Antonios Vozaites

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH AND THE NEW MILLENNIUM

The following speech was delivered by Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) of Pergamos at the Balamand Monastery (Lebanon) on December 4, 1999. It is thought provoking, as it sheds much light on issues we raise as individual Christians, and also as the Church, as we enter the new millennium.

I It is a great honor for me and a real pleasure to be invited to lecture in this institution and address you this evening. I should like to thank particularly the Dean of this Faculty, Archimandrite Paul, a former student of the theological Faculty of Thessalonika, for this invitation. I have always looked at this institution with admiration. For it is indeed one of the most important theological centers in the entire Orthodox world. His Holiness the Patriarch of Antioch and all the East Ignatius IV in cooperation with the rest of distinguished hierarchs of the patriarchate and with the body of professors and students have managed to bring a new spirit to this Theological Faculty so that it may broaden its horizons, and serve the Church in the best way in our times. The entire Orthodox Church is very grateful to the Patriarchate of Antioch for the contribution it makes through institutions like this to the spiritual welfare of Orthodoxy.

The close of the 20th century and the arrival of the new millennium are part of our conventional conception of time and in this sense, they are of no fundamental significance for us Christians. The fact that many festivities will take place all over the world on this occasion should not lead

us to think that there is a particular significance in any change of the calendar years, since for us the significant changes in time are related only to the great events of salvation history which we celebrate liturgically in the feasts of our Church. And yet, even in such conventional changes of time, Christians should pause and reflect. Not only each one of us personally should do that, but also the Church as a whole must use this as an occasion for reflection and even self-examination and self-criticism. It is in such a spirit that I propose to submit to your consideration certain reflections on the way the Christian Church understands its ministry and its witness in the beginning of the new millennium.

What kind of a world have we inherited from the 20th century and from the expiring millennium? And what problems and possibilities lie ahead of us? What can the Orthodox Church in particular witness to in the context of the world as it appears to be at the beginning of the new millennium?

II If we look back at the two thousand years of Christian history, we shall be overwhelmed at the same time with both joy and disappointment. The reasons for joy and satisfaction are the following:

1. The very fact of the Church's survival. This is by no means a simple matter to be taken for granted. The Church was born in a hostile world and suffered severe persecutions not only in the first century, but even in our own times. In spite of all this, she still exists. The words of St. Paul, "we die and, look, we are still alive," apply fully to the Church's history, at least until

now. How is this to be explained? Perhaps by sheer chance and historical circumstance as a rationalist would say. For us believers, the answer lies in our Lord's words that "not even the gates of hell will overcome the Church." Be it as it may, we cannot but be thankful to God for having preserved the Church in existence over the centuries.

The fact that the basic traditions and structure of the Church have been preserved in spite of the Church's involvement in so many influences from the cultural contexts in which she finds herself. This too is a great miracle. The Church lives in the world, but she is not of the world. The frontiers between Church and world are always difficult to establish. This will always be the fundamental problem of the Church, that is the preservation of her identity without withdrawing from the world into a ghetto.

The fact that the Church has made an impact on culture wherever she found herself. This was not the case only in Byzantium or in the Middle Ages in the West where we can almost speak of a Christian culture. It was also true even in modern times when the Church in the West was officially and emphatically pushed aside as an irrelevant factor in the creation of humanistic culture. Many of the humanistic and moral values of modern society are nothing but Christian principles of moral behavior. The Church has not been as irrelevant to human life as some people have wanted her to be.

Particularly for the Orthodox Church, there are many reasons to be thankful to God. We have never been

politically powerful except perhaps in Byzantium or in some modern nations inhabited by an Orthodox majority. But even in those cases, we have willingly developed institutions such as monasticism in order to remind ourselves that the Church does not belong to the world. Overall the

days of suffering and humiliation have by far outnumbered those of glory and secular power in the history of Orthodoxy. Our Church can boast more for her martyrs and ascetics than for her worldly

power. We can only thank God for that. For as Paul put it, "God's power is perfected in weakness." Especially in the 20th century, the Orthodox Church has good reasons to be thankful to our Lord for the fact that Orthodox theology has recovered its Patristic roots, realized the importance of the "lex orandi" particularly of the Holy Eucharist, and rediscovered the spirit of the Desert Fathers in and through a monastic renaissance of impressive dimensions. All this has been witnessed to in the context of the Ecumenical Movement in which the witness of Orthodoxy has been very strong in spite of our rather weak participation in it.

As to the disappointments and failures, there is, I am afraid, a great deal to feel sorry and repent for. There is a failure to truly and deeply Christianize the world. The Church's mission has been either insufficient, as is the case with us Orthodox, or essentially unchristian, as it has happened with much of the missionary zeal and activities of the western Christians. We have mixed up the Gospel with the national and cultural values of a particular time. And we have thus failed to

achieve a true inculturation of the Church. In many cases, Christian missions have been confused with the imposition of Christianity on certain peoples without regard to cultural particularities. Christianity has not loved the human beings as much as its Lord did, and we must be sorry for that.

There is the tragic division of Christianity itself. Especially the second millennium has witnessed a polemic and hatred among Christians previously unheard of in history. There is little point in trying to prove who is to be blamed for that. Our Desert Fathers have always taught us that we should always blame ourselves for the sins of all the others. Today there is a tendency among the Orthodox to stress the responsibility of the western Christians for the evil of division and for the wrongs done to the Orthodox Church by our Western brothers. History is, of course, clear in witnessing to the fact of a great deal of aggressiveness against the Orthodox on the part of the West. Deep however in the tragic reality of Christian division lies also an inability of the Orthodox to overcome and rise above the psychology of polemic in a true spirit of forgiveness and love. Confessional zeal has often proved stronger than forgiveness and love. The second millennium has been in this respect almost an unfortunate period of the Church's history.

There has been a failure to interpret the Gospel in existential terms. Fundamentalism, confession-ism, and conservatism have killed the Bible and the dogmas of the Church, turning them into formulae to be preserved rather than lived and experienced. Dogma and

ethics have been separated. And the same has happened with the *lex credendi* and *lex orandi*. Piety and theology have become two different domains. In fact the more pious one is, the less of a theologian he or she is. Similar dichotomies have occurred between dogma and canon law, or ecclesiology and Church administration. Bishops have become administrators, and it is almost a disqualification for them if they happen to be theologians. All this has led to a marginalization of theology from ordinary life, even from Church life.

There is particularly for us Orthodox an infiltration of the Church by nationalism and sometimes ethno-phyletism. The idea of autocephaly has become autocephalism, that is a means of serving national or phyletic interests by using the Church for that purpose. The situation with the Orthodox Diaspora in the 20th century is in direct and open violation of Orthodox ecclesiology. There can be little doubt that we cannot be proud and happy with such a situation, although unfortunately we seem to have blessed it in the most official way.

This is what we have inherited from the past, from the two millennia of Church history, some of it offering us reasons to be thankful, while another part giving us grounds for repentance. An awareness of both of these will be extremely helpful as we approach the new millennium. The problems that this new historical period brings with it will demand a lot of reconsideration of our past.

(This article will be continued in future issues of the Herald)

YEAR 2000
EVENTS
TO REMEMBER

March 5
Taste of the Town

March 12
Godparent's Sunday

May
Western Barbecue

September
Food Festival

November
Pentahiliarikon

December
New Year's Eve Party

Have You Watched
Annunciation Cathedral's
Wonderful
Dance Groups
&
Great Basketball Teams
Lately?

If you haven't,
boy, have you missed
a lot of
fun and warm fuzzies!

ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL

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